

Roads to Soldier Hollow now open

By Gib Twyman

Deseret News staff writer



2002 OLYMPICS

sketches on a napkin during lunch a few years ago at the Wagon Wheel (cafe) in

SOLDIER HOLLOW—Grant Thomas gazed upon new access roads sprucing up the Soldier Hollow venue for the 2002 Olympics and became nostalgic about squiggly lines.

“These roads started as

Heber,” Thomas, vice president of venue development for the Salt Lake Organizing Committee, said Monday at a ribbon-cutting celebrating completion of 2.5 miles of roads costing \$3 million. “It’s interesting to see it wind up so well done and just about as it was envisioned.”

Gov. Mike Leavitt helped hold a banner as three roller-skiers from the U.S. biathlon/cross country program burst through the words “NOW OPEN!”

“In 16 months, these scenes that are so familiar to many of us up here will

become known to the world. We’re proud of the quality of the work, while preserving the unique scenery and environment of this jewel,” Leavitt said, adding a note of levity. “I remember every other time we’ve come to Soldier Hollow we’ve had to wash the car. Not now with these new roads.”

John Njord, deputy director of the Utah Department of Transportation, said, “Sometimes people think you just start up a bulldozer and a road happens. This represents the fine work of lots of people to

see this vision through to the end.”

However, there was a big whoa to the hurrahs being handed all around.

“As far as our take on this goes, this is a nice beginning. This is not the grand finale of anything,” said Bob Mathis, Wasatch County Olympic coordinator. “There’s a lot of work still to be done before anyone can say we’re ready to transport the world in and out of Soldier Hollow in a safe, efficient manner.”

That’s because the county maintains SLOC and UDOT must help the county do

something about several roads and intersections surrounding the Soldier Hollow complex. These surfaces must be negotiated by fleets of buses ferrying an estimated 20,000 spectators a day to and from 2002’s busiest venue — medal competition all 16 days; eight of them dual medal days.

Thomas was ready to discuss the county’s concerns.

“I want you to know I brought my list with me,” he said, digging into a brief-

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Closed

Here's a list of what's closed on Thanksgiving (Nov. 23).

Parking meters:

Free parking.

U.S. Postal Service:

No deliveries Thursday. All post offices except the airport post office will be closed. Special and express mail deliveries will be made. Collections will be made at boxes marked for holiday collection.

State liquor stores:

All state liquor stores will be closed.

Federal, state, city

It's a very fast service. Much faster than most people's home computers," Bachman said.

Metricom tested the service the past year in San Francisco, Seattle and Washington, D.C. It's now taking the service nationwide to the 46 largest markets.

"The people in the cities that have used this service really like it," Bachman said.

The first step in bringing the service to Utah is obtaining franchise agreements with cities to install the bread box-size radio transmitters on the arms of streetlight poles. To provide

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Maureen Bachman

Metricom site acquisition manager

Metricom originally proposed.

The contract says the city will get up to 10 free subscriptions and the city also has the option of increasing the 5 percent franchise fee to 6 percent. Metricom, saying it has made policy changes since the contract was drafted, wanted the franchise fee capped at 5 percent and the free subscriptions based on a formula tied to the number of subscribers within a jurisdiction — which would probably give American Fork two to four subscriptions.

The City Council refused to make the changes

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Awards ceremony at the state Capitol.

In conjunction with National Family Week, Nov. 19-25, the Coalition for Utah Families honored those who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to strengthening the family.

This year's Outstanding Leadership award was given to Gordon B. Hinckley, president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for his "untiring efforts to strengthen families." His recently published book, "Standing for Something" examines 10 neglected virtues that have been proven to strengthen both individuals and their homes.

Lt. Gov. Olene Walker's service and advocacy to families, specifically in connection with literacy, child care, foster care, safety and education, earned her the Friend of Family award. Her work with

the Professional Award for her Family Now project. As part of the project, St. Claire set up a toll-free information line and produced numerous public service announcements on foster care and domestic violence.

Midvale and American Fork cities were honored in this year's Community awards category.

Midvale gained recognition for its FACT program (Families, Agencies and Communities Together), as well as its Neighbor-to-Neighbor and Community-Building-Community Initiative programs. Through the programs, Midvale has provided a "continuum of social supports and economic resources."

Volunteers in American Fork sacrificed a combined 31,000 hours to make the community's Literacy Center in the public library a reality. A council of 22 members, including PTSA groups, business partners, local citizen and members of the City Council, helped bring the focus of the importance of literacy in the family to the community.

The Utah Coalition was devel-

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11-21-00

case and producing a paper containing 12 places the county believes still require attention. "I've driven these roads before, but I'm driving them again today to reacquaint myself with the places they want us to consider."

While past communications have indicated the county must lower expectations of SLOC support for some projects, Thomas on Tuesday proclaimed all avenues of consideration open.

"We are evaluating all requests. We haven't by any means closed discussions with the county," Thomas said.

What's helped SLOC's approachability is \$72 million in recent congressional funding for such transit

projects. The money is short of the \$77.5 million requested, but Thomas said, "We think we can be successful in meeting most of the needs at various venues."

Heading Wasatch County's concerns is 2400 South, major return route on the bus loop from Soldier Hollow to park-and-ride lots west of Charleston. The county has offered to fund improvements for the part of 2400 South it maintains. The remaining stretch is maintained by Charleston, and the county believes the financial burden shouldn't be on such a small community to fix a seriously potholed roadbed with a world-class event brought to its doorstep.

"The county stepping forward to do its part helps our decisions," Thomas said.

Other main concerns include widening and filling steep ditches

along shoulders of U-113 between 2400 South and Tate Lane, primary entrance to Soldier Hollow; and 250 West running from Midway to Stringtown Road, then the Upper Road access to Soldier Hollow, planned mostly for use by athletes and Olympic officials.

Some of the requests, such as new turn lanes and widening at the intersection of U.S. 189 and U.S. 40 at the south end of Heber, Thomas said, may be handled by traffic management more than structural improvements.

"We think we can handle this spot better by people-moving configurations instead of just laying down more asphalt," he said.

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